

Time for the Dwarf

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Summary: Somebody else enters Tyrion's cell before Oberyn Martell, and through a much stranger door than the iron one, and decides to help him out

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Tyrion Lannister sat in his cell, contemplating the fickle nature of humanity as he whiled away his last hours on earth. He regretted his anger towards Shae, his hatred for his father and sister, and most of all his rash decision to call a trial by combat. He had been sitting in this dank, dark cell for days and there seemed to be no respite. Nobody was coming to help him, not even Jamie. But that was to be expected, really, their father would never risk the golden son.

He could make the attempt, fight for his life and all that. He was strong in a lot of ways, he was quicker than one would expect, and he was handy with an axe. Not a chance of living, though.

The Mountain that Rides would be his opponent, or the opponent of anyone stupid enough to try and side with Tyrion over Tywin. Just thinking about what that madman would do to him was making Tyrion green.

No, wait, that was something else.

Tyrion's eyes shoot up, and he watches with complete incomprehension as a ball of green light springs into existence in his cell and then implodes, depositing someone on the dirty ground with a thump. Standing, the dwarf slowly approaches the heap of person, and notes the curves.

A woman had just popped into existence in his cell.

"The gods truly do love me," was all that Tyrion can think to say as

he finally gets a look at the woman from the front.

Green eyes flit up to catch his own, and the woman snorts, "Let's hope not, if they brought you me."

"Now why ever would you say that?" Tyrion asks, taking what could be the last chance to have some fun with another person by both hands, "A beautiful young lady is dropped into my dark, lonely cell to help me whittle away the last few hours of my life. It's the stuff of legends!"

The woman rolls onto her back and pulls herself into a sitting position. Pushing her white hair out of her eyes she asks, "We're in a cell, are we? What did you do?"

"I've been accused of murdering my nephew," Tyrion tells her. No reason to lie to the woman who was probably nothing more than a figment of his twisted imagination. Though why his imagination would present him with a woman garbed in red leather, chainmail, and the sort of runic symbolism that is most commonly found somewhere to the North was beyond him.

"Did you?" She asks, pulling her legs together so that she sits cross-legged. She then pulls a sword from her back, sheath and all, and draws it for inspection.

Tyrion, slightly off put by the gleaming weapon, shakes his head, "No, my father simply sees this as a reason to get rid of me."

The woman raises an eyebrow at him, green eyes blinking before she returns to the sword. It passes inspection and she sheaths it, "I've seen more than my fair share of bad fathers, but I must say I've never heard of something like this."

Tyrion shrugs, "The animosity of the Lannisters isâ€¦ terrible."

"Oh, am I in Westeros?" The woman perks up, then she smiles, "That's a relief, I thought I'd been thrown into another world again."

"Another world?" Tyrion asks

The woman nods, "Yes."

Tyrion blinks at her, waits a moment, and then waves his hand in a come hither motion, "Do I get an explanation?"

"Probably better if I don't," The woman tells him apologetically.

Tyrion lets his hand droop, and then waves it again, "How about a name for the lovely lady?"

"Only if you'll give me yours," She counters with a smile

The dwarf nods, and bows, "Tyrion Lannister, m'lady."

"Cirilla Riannon," The woman tells him, and bows in return, "You may call me Ciri."

"A grand name, and I think I recognize it!" Tyrion notes, "You, my dear, must be named after the Last Hero's wife!"

"What?" Ciri snorts, "Of course I'm not! I'm the only Ciri that I know about."

Tyrion shrugs, letting the matter drop.

Ciri, eager to change the subject, asks, "So your trial is tomorrow?"

"Oh, I already had my trial," Tyrion tells her, "I made the horrific mistake of demanding a Trial by Combat."

"Well that can't be so bad," Ciri assures him, "I get the feeling you can be a scrappy fighter when you want to be."

"Oh, I know I can," Tyrion nods, moving back to his seat, "But my father will be sending the Mountain that Rides after me, thus my chances of survival are reduced to nothing."

Ciri pulls herself to her feet, smacks some loose dirt and hay from her pants, and frowns, "You don't have a champion you can call on? That's how they're done back home."

"My father would never allow my brother to do it, and my man Bronn already accepted my father's gold not to fight."

"He doesn't seem like that good of a man if he could be bought so easily," Ciri frowns

"It was his frugal nature and devotion to coin that drew me to him in the first place," Tyrion tells her, "I told him when I first hired him that if anyone tried to buy him I would double their payment, but alas my current state prevents me from doing so."

"And there's nobody else?"

"No, my father and my sister will see to that."

"Well, if you've got nobody else, I could fight for you," Ciri offers, long having inherited her adoptive father's habit of helping any helpless schmuck she happens to come across

Tyrion looks up at her, runs his eyes over her form in assessment, and knows with certainty that whatever he says will not involve her being unable to fight because she is a woman, "My lady, while I don't doubt your skills with a blade, Gregor Clegane is a monster on two feet."

"Oh, good," Ciri smiles, seemingly relieved, "It's been quite some time since I've had the chance to kill a monster."

Tyrion narrows his eyes, and then he can't help but asks, "What are you?"

Green eyes light with mischief as she smiles, and she tells him, "I'm a Witcher."

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Tywin Lannister did not know what to think. He had been so sure that Oberyn Martell would try to take up the position as his son's champion in order to get revenge for the deaths of the previous royal family. In fact, the guards had said that Oberyn had indeed come down to the cells, but left shortly after. And then there had been a knock on the cell door from within, and a girl had demanded to be let out.

That same girl now sat across from him in his office, eyes as green as a Lannister's locked with his as they battled for mental dominance.

Neither of them lost, for it was Cersei that demanded his and the girl's attention, "Who are you!?"

The ashen haired young woman turned her attention from the patriarch of the Lannisters to his daughter, and told the queen, "I've already told you, I am Cirilla Riannon of Cintra."

"Cintra has not existed in a thousand years!" Cersei barked back, and Tywin had been surprised, his daughter had not given any indication that she had studied the past.

"And yet that does not change my answer," Cirilla's reply was dry, calm, and infuriating to the Queen Regent.

Cutting through Cersei's growing rage, Tywin took control of the conversation once more, "So you have volunteered to be my son's champion?"

"I have."

"And you know that it will be a fight to the death?"

"I do."

"And to those who would object to facing a woman against Gregor Clegane?"

"Fuck 'em."

Tywin nods. If his son wanted to let some poor girl who thought she was the Maid of Tarth die before he did, he would not object. It was also clear that the girl had been in fights before, if the scar across her eye were any indication.

"I wish you luck, then," The Hand of the King tells her, "the Trial will take place at noon."

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The Trial was indeed taking place at noon. When it arrived there were murmurs of discontent, confusion, and horror at the idea of putting another young lady in front of the Mountain that Rides.

The Mountain was licking his lips in excitement at the sight of the girl facing off against him. He didn't know why she wasn't wearing anything around her belly, but he'd enjoy putting his sword there and

then fucking the hole.

Ciri, as though she could read the massive man's mind, glared at him and ran a hand along the blade of her sword. He couldn't be sure, but Gregor thought he saw runic script glow along the blade as her fingers traced along the steel.

Their silent exchange of glares did not mean that everyone else was silent, as Maester Pycelle was busy droning on the usual platitudes that occurred before the Trial. Eventually the old man finished and walked off of the arena floor and Tywin stands, "Tyrion, you have one last chance to confess."

The dwarf glared at his father, then looked up at Ciri beside him, "Last chance to back out?"

"Not a chance," The Witcher smiles

Tyrion nods to her, then turns to his father and tells him, "Let the gods decide my fate."

"Very well," Tywin turns his attention to his man and the woman, "Step into the circle."

Gregor Clegane and Ciri steps into the circle, and then they begin to slowly circle each other. Tywin watches them loop the arena floor once, and then calls out, "Begin."

Immediately, the Mountain charges forward, his massive greatsword swinging in a sideways arc. Ciri brings her sword up, bends her knees, and in a surprising display of strength and footwork, catches Clegane's blade with her own, drives it upwards, ducks under it, and dances to the mountain's side.

Clegane finishes his swing and spins after the Witcher, his sword slamming downwards in a vertical strike, which again, Ciri dances out of the way of. This time, though, she does not leave the man unmarked.

The crowd gasp as Ciri's blade slides along Gregor's helm, which flies off.

The Witcher dances back as blood begins to pour down the Mountain's face from the long slice she had left along his brow. The big man raises a single hand and wipes at the blood. When he takes the hand away, he glares at the blood and his eyes lock on the woman who gave it to him. His rage only grows stronger as she smirks at him.

"How is she doing this?" Cersei demands of her father as the two combatants trade blows down below.

"I do not know," Tywin tells her before taking another sip of wine. He would, if asked, go so far as to admit that he was impressed by the girl's skill. Indeed, he might even believe that she would win. The style, skill, speed, and even strength that Cirilla Riannon of the dead nation Cintra told Tywin that the Mountain would indeed fall if he were not lucky or she was sloppy.

Ciri had been trained by Geralt of Rivia, though. Sloppy was not something he tolerated. He had been a loving father, but a terrifying

master with the sword when he and Vesemir had gotten into the nitty gritty of actually teaching her how to work with steel. Gone had been the theatrics of youth, and in had been the skills of a Witcher.

Skills she was putting to good use as she sliced the back of the Mountain's knee after he tried another vertical strike. This time she had catapulted herself over the man as he swung, landed behind him, and struck while he was turning.

When he did not fall, she was surprised, but not stupid enough to remain near him as she reassessed the best manner to take him down. He was slowing, learning to check his motions before he moved up to her. This was partly out of intelligence, but mostly out of necessity due to the damaged knee.

"I'm gonna cut yer belly open girl," The massive man growls, "And then I'm gonna fuck the hole!"

Ciri knocks a weak strike aside and jabs him in the stomach with her own blade, forcing him back a few stumbling steps, "What? Like that?"

The Mountain, not one to know taunting, roars in anger and tries to charge the woman, forgetting his injured leg in his rage. The limb, unable to hold three hundred pounds of flesh and an extra two hundred of steel, collapses as he moves. Ciri hops over her fallen opponent as he slides towards her, lands on his back, and jabs her sword down towards the back of his head.

But, as Tywin predicted, Gregor needed to be lucky, and he was. The Mountain heaved in pain as Ciri landed on his back, dislodging the girl and sending her stumbling backwards as she works to maintain her footing. She catches it, but too late to take out Clegane.

Once more, the pair were circling each other, Ciri matching the Mountain's slow pace as he trundled around the perimeter of the arena.

And then she watched as he misstepped. She smiled when she got a look at his face, the cut she had sliced across his forehead had bled enough that it was now coating his eyes, making it nearly impossible to see without clearing the blood away.

Which the Mountain tried to do.

He realized too late that he was doing exactly as she had planned for him to do. His sword hand flashed out in a horizontal arc, trying to ward her off. But she had not reached him yet, his untrained hearing had merely thought she was within range of a strike. Instead she had held back until he swung, and then dove forward and stabbed him under the arm.

There is a meaty thunk as the Mountain's arm slides from its sleeve and drops onto the ground, and it seems for a moment that the entire world has lost all sound but that dull thunk of flesh on stone.

The silence is shattered as Gregor Clegane screams in pain, his remaining hand going from his eyes to his arm hole. His nearly clean eyes lock onto Ciri's, and in that moment the Mountain that Rides

knows that he will die.

Tywin, Cersei, and everyone else watching can barely believe their eyes as the unknown woman from a long dead kingdom pokes the Mountain in the stomach with her sword, and sends the man stumbling back against the small stone railing separating the arena from a fifty foot drop down into the sea.

"Submit."

The Mountain stares at the woman. She had him dead to rights, probably more so without his arm, and as her sword was pointed at his neck, she gave him an opening. Stupid cunt, was his thinking.

But he was wrong, she was not being stupid, she was being merciful. She was letting him take the chance to live, but she could see in his eyes that he was not going to take it. And she knew exactly when he was going to strike.

Tyrion watches as Gregor Clegane, bloody and missing an arm, tries to knock the sword away from his throat and take Ciri down. He watches as Ciri lets her sword get hit by the barest of margins before spinning away from the tackling behemoth. And finally he watches as the Mountain's knee gives out, and Ciri takes his head off with a single strike as the massive man falls.

There is an eruption of noise, cheers drowning out the sliding of metal against metal as Ciri sheaths her blade on her back. She then strides over to Tyrion and smiles, "looks like you're a free man, Lord Lannister."

"Indeed it does, my lady," Tyrion smiles back, his hands busy being unshackled by a guard.

"Good luck to you, Tyrion Lannister," Ciri tells him, and she moves past the dwarf towards the path into the castle.

"And to you as well, Cirilla, the Lady of Space and Time," Tyrion agrees, finally, after hours of contemplating and thinking his way through the hundreds of books he'd read, understanding exactly had come to his rescue.

In the hours and the days after the death of the Mountain, there would be no sign of the strange woman who had fought for Tyrion Lannister and proved his innocence. The dwarf was quick to depart from King's Landing for Casterly Rock, and later still for parts unknown. The rule of the Lannisters was still shaken by the death of the boy King Joffrey, and with Tyrion proved innocent, eyes searched for daggers all the more fruitfully.

But Ciri was gone, vanished into the ether as though she had never been, back to a time when monsters were real, and winter was defeated, and her father was the Last Hero.

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